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EXAMINER

BELIVEAU, SCOTT E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2614

DATE MAILED: 07/29/2004

13

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/022,655

Applicant(s)

D'SOUZA ET AL.

Examiner

Scott Beliveau

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 July 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 3-21,24,25,27,29,31,33 and 35 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 3-21,24,25,27,29,31,33 and 35 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 3-21, 24, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, and 35 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Applicant's statements pertaining to the OFFICIAL NOTICE initially presented in the Non-Final Rejection, Paper No. 4, is acknowledged. The OFFICIAL NOTICE statement originally presented stated that it is notoriously well known in the art for a service provider to periodically distribute software to set top terminals in order to update operating parameters. In response applicant's explicitly conceded that it is known to distributed software to set-top boxes in their networks. To adequately traverse such a finding, an applicant must specifically point out the supposed errors in the examiner's action, which would include stating why the noticed fact is not considered to be common knowledge or well-known in the art. See 37 CFR 1.111(b). See also *Chevenard*, 139 F.2d at 713, 60 USPQ at 241 ("[I]n the absence of any demand by appellant for the examiner to produce authority for his statement, we will not consider this contention."). No comments were particularly directed as to why when updating software associated operating parameters would not be similarly impacted, nor was a demand made to produce authority of the statement in its entirety.

As is commonly understood in the art, when updating software the operating parameters associated with the device are similarly updated. Accordingly, it is unclear as to how the particular updating of the operating software in a set-top box would not also result in updating the particular operating parameters. For example, as set forth in the *Hendricks et al.* reference (of record), the software of a set top box either in its entirety or on a modular

basis may be updated in order to change the operating parameters associated with the display interface or other software programs including those which are utilized in the display/generation of a favorite channel list (Col 25, Line 25 – Col 28, Lines 63).

Accordingly, it is the examiner's position that the given the particular usage of a software derived arbitrary "view threshold value" in Candelore et al. as well as applicant's acceptance of the premise of a service provider being operable to update the software associated with the set top box, that it is reasonable to conclude that a service provider in updating the operating software of the set top box would further be operable to update an operating parameter such as the "view threshold value" as set forth in the grounds of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

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4. Claim 3-8, 18-21, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Candelore et al. (US Pub No. 2002/0104081), in view of Bates et al. (US Pat No. 6,721,953).

In consideration of claims 5, 18, and 19, Candelore et al. discloses a method implemented via a system with corresponding hardware based “means” and/or software or computer readable media comprising program code (Page 4, Para. 41) for “automatically flagging one or more tunable channels broadcast over a distribution network as a favorite channel” (Page 1, Para. 18) wherein the “list of automatic favorite channels” is associated in memory with both the “identifier” as well as the “indicator” (Page 3, Para. 32). As illustrated in Figure 5, the system is operable to “monitor commands input by the user” from an “input device” [5] including “command from the user to tune a channel” [402]. The system subsequently “records an identifier for the channel” [406] and may “increment a channel tune count indicator for the channel” (Table 5; Page 3, Para 30; Page 5, Paras. 48-51). This information is subsequently utilized to “select identifiers with the top indicators” for inclusion within the “list of automatic favorite channels” (Page 4, Para. 47) displayed to the user.

With respect to the “removing” step, the reference teaches that the particular list may comprise a list of the top 15 channels that have the highest count value in the stat table (Page 4, Para 38). For example, the reference discloses that the system may start with the first 10 channels and sort them by time wherein the channel with the lowest amount of time is replaced with the with new ones that it finds with more time using statistics stored in the stat tables [406] (Page 4, Para 47). Accordingly, it would have obvious to perform an analogous operation so as to “remove from the list of automatic favorite channels any identifier whose associated channel tune count indicator falls below a view threshold value” such that the

“view threshold value” is defined as the “channel tune count” associated with the 11th or 16th channel for the purpose of for the purpose of enabling the list of favorites to change accordingly to viewing habits when creating a top 10 or 15 channel list based on the number of times a channel has been accessed (Page 3, Para. 30).

While the Candelore et al. reference discloses a technique for automatically decrementing the associated channel tune count indicator for any identifier in the list of automatic favorite channels when the channel tune count indicator for a channel associated with the any identifier is not incremented within a predetermined period (Page 5, Paras. 48-51) such is not done in conjunction with an aging algorithm as claimed. The Bates et al. reference discloses a technique for generating and managing a list of favorite channels that further “ages the list of automatic favorite channels by automatically decrementing the associated channel tune count indicator for any identifier in the list of automatic favorite channels when the channel tune count indicator for a channel associated with the any identifier is not incremented within a time period that exceeds a predetermined period” (Bates et al.: Figure 6; Col 8, Lines 27-33; Col 13, Lines 34-37). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to modify Candelore et al. so as to further “age the list of automatic favorites” as taught by Bates et al. for the purpose of providing a means so as to emphasize programs/channels that have been watched more recently than others (Bates et al.: Col 8, Lines 29-32).

Claim 3 is rejected wherein Candelore et al. discloses that the system “records the amount of time that the channel was viewed” (Tables 1-3) and uses this information to

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“select identifiers with the top indicators and view times for inclusion within the list of automatic favorite channels” (Page 3, Para. 30; Page 4, Para. 45).

In consideration of claim 4, Candelore et al. discloses that the system is operable to create the list of favorites [408] based on “comparing the channel tune count indicator associated with a particular identifier with channel tune count indicators in the list of automatic favorite channels” in order to “determine if the indicator is greater than any indicator comprising the list”. The system subsequently “adds the particular identifier and the associated indicator to the list” if it is “greater than any other channel tune count indicator comprising the list” (Page 4, Para. 47).

Claim 6 is rejected wherein the “step of selecting” further includes determining whether the “channel tune count indicator associated with a channel exceeds the view threshold value” wherein the “view threshold value being related substantially to an Nth highest channel tune count indicator” (Candelore et al.: Page 4, Para. 38).

In consideration of claim 7, Candelore et al. discloses that the system is operable to enable the user to establish user settings/preferences for the system (Page 2, Para. 27). The reference further suggests that the system provides flexibility with respect to the user being operable to change the criteria upon which the favorite channels are based (Page 3, Para. 30). The reference, however, does not explicitly disclose nor preclude that the viewer may further related substantially to a “user defined value” such that the user may determine to only view the top 10 or top 15 channels referenced in conjunction with various examples disclosed. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to modify the invention if necessary, so as to provide the user with

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the ability to define the particular number of favorite channels (ex. 10 or 15) to display for the purpose of providing the user with the added flexibility to established their preferences for the particular number of favorite channels to be displayed. For example, if a system only comprises 10 channels, the particular display of all 10 channels as “favorites” would not be particularly useful.

In consideration of claim 8, the Candelore et al. reference does not explicitly disclose or preclude that the aforementioned “view threshold value” is a “value set dynamically by a content service provider”. It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to enable the system to set the “value” dynamically by a content service provider, since applicant has not disclosed that the particular dynamic setting of the value by a remote content service provider solves any stated problem or is for any particular purpose and it appears that the invention would perform equally well with the particular value being set by the user. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made so as to establish the “view threshold value” via the service provider for the purposes of simplifying the operation of the system such that the user need not specify the particular number of favorite channels to display.

Alternatively, as taken as an admission of fact, it is notoriously well known in the art for a service provider to periodically distribute software to set top terminal units in order to update operating parameters. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to modify the Candelore et al. embodiment, if necessary, to facilitate the updating of set top terminal software for the purpose of advantageously allowing the “content service provider” with the ability to customize and update the user’s interface

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remotely. Furthermore, in conjunction with the remote updating process of the user interface, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further enable the updating of a “threshold value” that determines the number of favorite channels to be displayed for the purpose of customizing the user interface menu format to display a particular number of favorite channels remotely.

Claim 20 is rejected wherein the aforementioned system [400] comprises a “channel list and view count data structure comprising a listing of channels viewed by a user and the number of times each channel has been tuned” [406]. The Candelore et al. system further comprises “favorite selection software” (Table 5; Page 3, Para 30; Page 4, Para 41; Page 5, Paras. 48-51) to “record an identifier for a channel”, to “increment and decrement a channel tune count indicator for the channel according to prescribed criteria” (Page 5, Paras. 48-51), and to further “select recorded identifiers with the top indicators for inclusion within a list of automatic favorite channels” [408] (Page 4, Paras. 44-47).

With respect to the amended “removing” step, the reference teaches that the particular list may comprise a list of the top 15 channels which have the highest count value in the stat table (Page 4, Para 38). For example, the reference discloses that the embodiment may start with the first 10 channels and sort them by time wherein the channel with the lowest amount of time is replaced with the with new ones that it finds with more time using statistics stored in the stat tables [406] (Page 4, Para 47). Accordingly, it would have obvious to perform an analogous operation so as to “remove from the list of automatic favorite channels any identifier whose associated channel tune count indicator falls below a view threshold value” such that the “view threshold value” is defined as the “channel tune count” associated with

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the 11th or 16th channel for the purpose of for the purpose of enabling the list of favorites to change accordingly to viewing habits when creating a top 10 or 15 channel list based on the number of times a channel has been accessed (Page 3, Para. 30).

As aforementioned, the Candelore et al. reference does not utilize an aging algorithm as particularly claimed. The Bates et al. reference discloses a technique for generating and managing a list of favorite channels that further “ages the list of automatic favorite channels by automatically decrementing the associated channel tune count indicator for any identifier in the list of automatic favorite channels when the channel tune count indicator for a channel associated with the any identifier is not incremented within a time period that exceeds a predetermined period” (Bates et al.: Figure 6; Col 8, Lines 27-33; Col 13, Lines 34-37). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to modify Candelore et al. so as to further “age the list of automatic favorites” as taught by Bates et al. for the purpose of providing a means so as to emphasize programs/channels that have been watched more recently than others (Bates et al.: Col 8, Lines 29-32).

Claim 21 is rejected wherein the “data structure and software” are stored on a “memory” [404] of a set top terminal [2] connected to the “distribution network” [3].

In consideration of claim 27, the Bates et al. reference discloses that older entries associated with the determination of favorite programs are decremented. However, the reference does not explicitly set forth the time based criteria or “predetermined period” that must pass prior to being deemed as “older”. It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to use a “predetermined period” of “one 24-hour period”, since the applicant has not disclosed that the particular duration of the period solves any stated problem or is for any

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particular purpose and it appears that the invention would perform equally well with a shorter or longer “predetermined period”. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made so as to utilize a “one 24-hour period” for the purpose of utilizing a particular timeframe criteria by which channel selection records may be designated as being older for the purpose of aging such that programs/channels that have been watched more recently (ex. within the last day) may be emphasized over those less recently watched.

5. Claims 9-14, 29, 31, and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Candelore et al. (US Pub No. 2002/0104081), in view of Bates et al. (US Pat No. 6,721,953), and in further view of Ohkura et al. (US Pat No. 5,737,029).

In consideration of claim 9, it is unclear if the Candelore et al. system further utilizes a means such that channels are only recorded if viewed for a minimum duration. The reference suggests the usage of a minimum time interval, however, it does not explicitly tie that with the recording of an identifier. The Ohkura et al. reference discloses a method for determining favorite channels that is operable to “compare a duration that the channel is viewed for against a time threshold” such as 5 minutes wherein the identifier is only “recorded” if the “viewed for a duration greater than the time threshold” (Col 8, Lines 22-27). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Candelore et al., if necessary, so as to only “increment the associated channel tune count indicator” based on a time threshold as disclosed by Ohkura et al. for the purpose of advantageously to avoid the counting of

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broadcasting channels that are received for a short duration (Ohkura et al.: Col 8, Lines 22-27).

In consideration of claim 10, the Candelore et al. reference discloses that the system is operable to “receive indication of a selection of a favorite control on the input device” (Figure 3) so as to activate the list of favorite channels. Furthermore, the reference discloses that the system utilizes the input device [5] direction keys so as to traverse an EPG (Page 3, Para. 29). The reference, however, does not explicitly disclose that the user may utilize the aforementioned to “traverse the list of automatic channels”. The commonly assigned Ohkura et al. reference discloses an EPG wherein the embodiment may “receive indication of a selection” of a “favorite control” [160] on the “input device” [50] in order to “traverse the list of automatic favorite channels” (Col 11, Lines 19-28). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to modify the Candelore et al. system to utilize the channel selection techniques of Ohkura et al. for the purpose of improving the operability of channel selection so that the user can choose an intended broadcasting channel swiftly (Col 1, Lines 46 – Col 2, Line 40).

Claim 11 is rejected wherein the “list of automatic favorite channels” (Figures 16-21) may be “traversed one channel for each time the favorite control is selected” (Figure 15; Col 10, Lines 24-46)

Claim 12 is rejected wherein the “list of automatic favorite channels” may be “traversed . . . in order according to a rank of the channels in the list of automatic favorites” using the up-down “favorite control” [160].

In consideration of claim 13, the Candelore et al. reference discloses that the system is operable to “display an electronic program guide” and to further “retrieve the list of automatic favorite channels” in conjunction with the guide (Page 2, Para. 20). The reference, however, does not explicitly disclose nor preclude the particular composition of the guide such that the “scope of information presented by the electronic program guide” is limited to programming available on channels comprising the list of automatic favorite channels”. As illustrated in Figures 16-21 of the Ohkura et al. embodiment may “display an electronic program guide” that is “limited” to “programming available on channels” of the “retrieved . . . list of the automatic favorite channels.” Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Candelore et al. EPG so as to “limit” the guide display to programming associated with the list of automatic favorite channels as illustrated in Ohkura et al. for the purpose of improving the operability of channel selection so that the user can choose an intended broadcasting channel swiftly given that only programming associated with the favorite channels is displayed (Ohkura et al.: Col 1, Lines 46 – Col 2, Line 40).

Claim 14 is rejected wherein the system is operable to “receive” and “extract programming information” or “guide data” for “presentation within the electronic programming guide” (Ohkura et al.: Col 5, Lines 9-19; Col 8, Lines 4-6).

In consideration of claims 29, 31, and 33, the Bates et al. reference discloses that older entries associated with the determination of favorite programs are decremented. However, the reference does not explicitly set forth the time based criteria or “predetermined period” that must pass prior to being deemed as “older”. It would have been an obvious matter of

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design choice to use a “predetermined period” of “one 24-hour period”, since the applicant has not disclosed that the particular duration of the period solves any stated problem or is for any particular purpose and it appears that the invention would perform equally well with a shorter or longer “predetermined period”. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made so as to utilize a “one 24-hour period” for the purpose of utilizing a particular timeframe criteria by which channel selection records may be designated as being older for the purpose of aging such that programs/channels that have been watched more recently (ex. within the last day) may be emphasized over those less recently watched.

6. Claims 13, 15, 16, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Candelore et al. (US Pub No. 2002/0104081), in view of Bates et al. (US Pat No. 6,721,953), in view of Noguchi et al. (US Pat No. 6,034,677).

In consideration of claim 13, the Candelore et al. reference discloses that the system is operable to “display an electronic program guide” [4A] and to further “retrieve the list of automatic favorite channels” (Page 2, Para. 20). The reference, however, does not explicitly disclose nor preclude that the composition or nature of the EPG. Furthermore, the reference does not explicitly disclose that the information is necessarily “limited” in scope to “presenting the programming available on channels comprising the list of automatic channels”.

The Noguchi et al. discloses a method and apparatus for displaying programming information in the form of an “electronic program guide” (Figure 13). Among its other features, the reference discloses that the guide may facilitate the user in designating certain

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programs as favorite programs. The reference, however, does not explicitly disclose nor preclude that this designation is a manual or automatic process or does it provide details pertaining to implementation of such an automated process. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the Noguchi et al. favorite channel designation method to utilize the automatic flagging favorite channel teachings of Candelore et al. for the purpose of presenting the viewer with a selection of favorites based on a number of criteria without having to program manually the list of favorites (Candelore et al.: Page 1, Para. 18). Furthermore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the Noguchi et al. reference to include a "Favorites" category for the purpose of facilitating the finding and selection of programming associated with favorite channels (Candelore et al. Page 1, Para. 3).

In consideration of claim 15, as illustrated in Figure 13, the program guide comprises a "full screen program guide comprising listings of programs available on the distribution network" (Noguchi et al.: Col 9, Lines 6-18).

Claim 16 is rejected wherein as illustrated in Figures 10-13, the full screen program guide [1301] comprises "audio and video associated with the channel viewed before the guide is displayed" (Noguchi et al.: Col 8, Line 25 – Col 9, Line 8).

Claim 25 is rejected wherein the system "includes the step of causing an icon to be displayed when a channel being viewed is on the list of automatic favorite channels" [2314] (Noguchi et al.: Figure 23; Col 15, Lines 5-9).

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7. Claims 17 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Candelore et al. (US Pub No. 2002/0104081), in view of Bates et al. (US Pat No. 6,721,953), and in further view of McClard (US Pat No. 6,438,752).

In consideration of claim 17, the Candelore et al. reference discloses a scenario wherein the system is operable to “determine a time of day and a day of the week” and “based upon the day and time” select the “identifier” with the top indicator (Page 5, Para. 55). The system is operable to “select identifiers with the top indicators for inclusion within a list of automatic favorite channels” based on one or more items according to user preferences (Page 2, Para. 28; Page 3, Para. 30). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the system, if necessary, to provide an automatic list [408] using two or more identifiers such as “time of day and a day of the week” for the purpose of advantageously assisting the user in selecting favorite programming options that are relevant to current time period. For example, while it might be interesting to learn that “Green Acres” is a favorite program, the information is not particularly helpful/useful if the program is not currently being aired.

Assuming *arguendo*, the McClard reference explicitly discloses a method to “select identifiers with the top indicators for inclusion within a time specific list of automatic favorite channels” (Col 6, 6, Lines 16-61). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the Candelore et al. reference, if necessary, so as to generate a “time specific list of automatic favorite channels” as taught by McClard for the purpose of providing a system which allows each individual

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user to quickly and easily browse through programs of particular interest regardless of the time of day or week (McClard: Col 2, Lines 4-7).

In consideration of claim 35, the Bates et al. reference discloses that older entries associated with the determination of favorite programs are decremented. However, the reference does not explicitly set forth the time based criteria or “predetermined period” that must pass prior to being deemed as “older”. It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to use a “predetermined period” of “one 24-hour period”, since the applicant has not disclosed that the particular duration of the period solves any stated problem or is for any particular purpose and it appears that the invention would perform equally well with a shorter or longer “predetermined period”. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made so as to utilize a “one 24-hour period” for the purpose of utilizing a particular timeframe criteria by which channel selection records may be designated as being older for the purpose of aging such that programs/channels that have been watched more recently (ex. within the last day) may be emphasized over those less recently watched.

8. Claim 24 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Candelore et al. (US Pub No. 2002/0104081), in view of Bates et al. (US Pat No. 6,721,953), in further view of Florence (US Pub No. 2002/0188948).

In consideration of claim 24, the Candelore et al. reference does not explicitly illustrate that the stat tables [406] further comprise “information conveying the particular channel and a service carried on that channel”. The reference however, suggests that the stat tables [406] store statistics comprising any other item type in determining a list of favorites (Page 3, Para.

33). The Florence reference discloses the storing of an “identifier for a particular channel” that comprises “information conveying the particular channel and a service carried on that channel” such as a channel number and associated provider associated with that channel for use in determining a list of favorite channels (Figure 4B). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to modify the stat tables [406] to further comprise any other type of information in determining a list of favorite channels including information “conveying the particular channel and a service carried on that channel” as illustrated in Florence for the purpose of utilizing any other item type available in determining a list of favorites.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure as follows. Applicant is reminded that in amending in response to a rejection of claims, the patentable novelty must be clearly shown in view of the state of the art disclosed by the references cited and the objections made.

- The Rothmuller (US Pat No. 5,635,989) reference discloses a method and apparatus for generating a list of favorite programs and associated channels which may be automatically aged responsive to failing to watch the program within a predetermined period of time.
- The Trovato et al. (US Pat No. 6,445,306) reference discloses a system and apparatus for recommending programs wherein a program's weight is reduced based on the amount of time since the last viewing.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott Beliveau whose telephone number is 703-305-4907.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John W. Miller can be reached on 703-305-4795. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

SEB
July 16, 2004


JOHN MILLER
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600